

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 6 APRIL 2003

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications wing of the South African Radio League and is responsible for providing emergency communication in times of distress or national disasters to local and regional authorities, when requested to do so.

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HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN - Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz

National Bulletin at 17H00 local on 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz

Gauteng North on Tuesdays at 20:30. The frequencies are 145,725MHz and either on 7,070MHz in the 40M band or 3,695MHz in the 80M band. There is a possibility that their bulletin times may change in due course but you will be advised.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145.700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is e-mailed to all those of whom I have address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

2003 AGM HAMNET PORTFOLIO

I am pleased to announce that I will retain the HAMNET portfolio for this coming year. At the first Council meeting after a very lengthy AGM, the portfolios and responsibilities accepted by myself will include not only HAMNET but also the position as Office Manager of the NARC, Minute Secretary for all council meetings as well as the QSL Manager. This is going to keep me rather busy for the foreseeable future, but my first priority will always be HAMNET.

At this moment in time, I wish to thank all those who gave us support last year and will continue to do so in the new year that awaits us.

WILRO PARK LIONS CYCLE RACE

This race took place earlier today. A full report will be published in next Sunday's bulletin. Suffice to say, more than 20 volunteers gave up their time for this event and it went off pretty well.

UPCOMING EVENTS

There are a few items of note that will be taking place during the month of April, which kicks off with the HAMNET field day on the 13th.

This is a good opportunity to set up field stations, check equipment and have some fun by making contacts all over the country with old friends and also showing the benefit of amateur radio to those who are interested, not only in the hobby, but also in emergency communication that is a natural resource available to the community in general.

This is a country where major disasters are few and far between. This makes us a little complacent. The field day is an excellent opportunity to practice communication skills, to learn how to listen carefully and to keep accurate notes. With the decline in the interest of amateur radio, this is also a good opportunity to set up your station in a visible place where people can see what we are doing and entice them to come over and see for themselves.

Please make the most of it and enjoy the contest.

On the 19th of April, HAMNET will again be very involved with the Two Oceans Marathon around the Cape Peninsula. Dave Reece, ZS1DFR informed me that HAMNET would be out in force for this event. What we should also consider is to have some form of banner made for display where we have fixed stations, advertising not only HAMNET but also who we are - amateur radio operators doing our bit for the community.

I sincerely hope that this will also be a fun filled day and that communications will be of the highest standard.

A little early, but I believe from 14 - 17 May there is a Hobbies Exhibition in Cape Town. What a fabulous venue to set up an amateur radio station and to get the people interested in our hobby.

My thanks also must go to Keith Lowes ZS5WFD and his team for setting up an excellent display of HAMNET in Kwa Zulu Natal on the 29th of last month to not only promote amateur radio but to promote HAMNET.

Should there be an event in your area where amateur radio or HAMNET can be used, please let me know so we can benefit from such events. KZN in particular keep me well informed and up to date of events in their province.

THE FLOODS IN MONTAGUE

Although we became aware of the problem within hours, it appears that emergency communication was not required during and after heavy rains left a path of destruction in the Montague, Barrydale and Swellendam areas 10 days ago.

I alerted a few HAMNET operators in the Western Cape and asked them to keep me informed, but after listening to commercial radio, it seems that everything was under control. My thanks in any event to those who were on standby to render emergency communications should it have been required.

Please be aware that summer is not quite over yet and that with winter approaching, things could change drastically in the Western Cape region.

AROUND THE WORLD - EVENTS AND DISASTERS

It is very interesting to note that the RSGB have a new website page in development which we will follow with interest. This is an international listing of all Amateur Radio Emergency networks around the world.

This site could be of immense value in times of international disasters with hopefully websites where we could access information and possibly also communicate directly with such organisations. We will keep you informed.

Looking at the Relief Website during this week, I came across a list of 23 countries where at this moment in time Complex Emergencies as they call it exist, of which 10 are in Africa.

Natural disasters. The most recent was a landslide in Bolivia. A side of a mountain gave way after torrential rain and covered about 400 homes in a mining town in northern Bolivia. It is a gold mining town called Chima, about 190 km north of La Paz and it is estimated that between 30 to 400 people are still buried under the mud.

In India, a severe hailstorm with accompanying wind speeds of up to 60-70 kilometres per hour affected 3 areas in West Bengal. At least 30 people died and the hail injured more than 500. Damage to property included 31,277 houses fully collapsed, and 35,000 plus partially collapsed. The storm also damaged electricity supply lines and caused huge loss of crops in the area.

From the Pacific, in New Caledonia: the aftermath of Cyclone Erica, which ravaged the Island on the 14th of March, is causing grave concern to health standards in the area. The breakdown of infrastructure has caused a breakdown of services to various areas and there is concern of various diseases that may proliferate. Mosquito-borne dengue fever, rat-transmitted diseases and poor quality of drinking water is of major concern.

Finally, not forgetting our neighbour Mozambique. They are still seeking emergency aid to provide temporary shelter for about 15000 people displaced by the floods in central Sofala province after the two recent Cyclones named Delfina and Japhet that dumped heavy torrential rain in that area.

Bulletin ends.